

NEWS AND NOTES

What's New in Polynesia

Hawai'i.

Ka Lahui, the Hawaiian sovereignty group, has selected UNPO (the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization) of Holland to look into a pending state-authorized plebiscite on Hawaiian sovereignty, which *Ka Lahui* claims is illegal. The plebiscite set for October 1995 is, according to *Ka Lahui*, a violation of Hawaiians' human rights to self-determination.

Pacific News Bulletin, 9(9):13.

Marquesas Islands.

Changes have been made in regard to the 1st International Conference for Marquesan Studies Organized by the Pa'evi'i Documentation Center, formerly scheduled for July of 1995:

Due to a schedule change in the Mendaña anniversary program, the conference is now planned for December 1995. It will still be held in conjunction with the Mendaña program, probably at the end. Abstracts will now be required in December 1994.

A similar meeting is scheduled to take place in Paris in November 1995. The majority of French researchers will probably attend that meeting. We do expect a few at the Pa'evi'i Conference. Because of scheduling conflict and logistical realities in the Marquesas the conference is being scaled down. It will still be interdisciplinary, and you are encouraged to attend.

Anyone still interested in participating in this altered program, please confirm that interest by contacting David Addison, Coordinator of Anglophone Contributions: Tel: (808) 956-8305; Fax (808) 956-4893; or E-mail: daddison@uhunix.uncc.Hawaii.Edu.

Pitcairn.

A survey is on-going in Pitcairn waters to explore the fisheries of Ducie, Oeno, Henderson and Pitcairn. Several fishing companies have expressed interest in harvesting the waters of these islands. A license to fish has been offered to the Steward Island Company, Southern Seafoods.

The Pitcairn Miscellany, Vol.37(3).

Tahiti.

The government of French Polynesia has reached an agreement with trade unions which ends a 6 day strike and partial blockade of Papeete. This dispute is over a local social security levy and dual taxation; it erupted following actions of the territorial assembly which voted in increase income tax. An estimated 6-10 thousand people participated-the largest protest since the anti-nuclear demonstrations of the 1970s.

(Pacific News Bulletin 9(10):4.

Marshall Islands.

The government of the Republic of Marshall Islands is seriously negotiating with the US government to turn one of its islands into a nuclear waste dump. Opponents to this plan cite various problems: the Marshalls are atolls and thus porous; there is doubt that safe permanent storage containers

can be build either above or under ground; a rise in sea level could have major implications; tidal waves are frequent, flooding nearly half of the Marshalls annually; and the nuclear waste would have to be shipped over thousands of miles of ocean.

Pacific News Bulletin, 9(8):5,7.

New Zealand.

New Zealand has been accused of lagging behind Australia in creating policies for the treatment of indigenous people. In 1984, a Maori economic summit supported the idea of making Maori Affairs Ministry accountable to the Maori people but the idea was not implemented although a similar one was adopted by Australia.

Pacific News Bulletin, 9(9):13.

A joint project between the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research in New Zealand and the Chemistry Department of the University of the South Pacific will collect data needed for mathematical models predicting climate change in the region.

University of the South Pacific Bulletin, 27(25):1994.

What's New in Hangaraoa

• According to *El Mercurio de Valparaiso* (September 19th), Alberto Hotus will ask for a modification of the *Ley Indigena* that gives outsiders who are married to islanders full rights to buy land. Hotus noted that the current population of the island is 3,090 and that if such incentives exist, in 3 or 4 years the population would become 10 thousand or more, "which would be fatal for the island." He will present his case to the new commission created to resolve problems of the island. Hotus will also propose the creation of a visa requirement, similar to what is required on other Polynesian islands, in order to control the ingress of people, to know who is going to the island, whether the person intends to work and live there, and what he will bring. Hotus explained that a visa would be good for the island "because there are people that go there only looking for business, trying to acquire land, how to sell things to islanders, and the Rapanui have no idea who is coming and from where. Some come to find work. We already have enough problems there."

• One week after the above news appeared in Chilean papers, the following item was reported in *El Mercurio de Valparaiso* under the title: "Commission will propose rewriting a new law for Easter Island."

The Chilean Government's Commission of the Interior met on Easter Island and collected opinions from its inhabitants and organizations. It will now suggest a new law specifically for the island, based on the *Ley Indigena* and the old *Ley Pascua*. The new *Ley Pascua* will keep some aspects of the *Ley Indigena* with the idea of structuring a legal document that recognizes the cultural patrimony and economic elements of Rapa Nui, according to the conservative congressman, Carlos Cantero, president of this

legislative group. Cantero added that they are working on information gathered during a visit to the island. Six congressmen participated in meetings with the Rapa Nui community, the political parties, the two *Consejo de Ancianos* (hereafter *CdeA*), the representative of the island's mixed couples (islanders married to continentals), and young people.

Cantero said that there is social instability on the island as indicated by the demonstrations and the appearance of Rapa Nui flags around the village: 'these are an expression of resentment of the island community.' As an example, he noted the 'takeover' of unused land beside the island church where a tent was put up and where there are persons that are calling to the attention of the international public their proposals and demands in connection with the ownership of the land and the rejection of the *Ley Indigena*.

The biggest discrepancy, according to Cantero, is manifested in the division that has occurred within the *CdeA* and which has given rise to two distinct entities, each with their own meetings, expectations and demonstrations. The differences between *CdeA* No.1, presided over by Mayor Hotus, and *CdeA* No.2, presided over by Juan Chavez, originate from the difficulties of ancestral origin and are concerned with cultural patrimony not well recognized in the *Ley Indigena*. With respect to that law, there is growing rejection of it on the part of islanders for they do not consider themselves part of the 'indigenous concept' but rather believe they belong to Rapanui or Polynesian culture.

As for ownership of land, Cantero said that *CdeA* No.2 claims that much of the land has been usurped from them and is community property instead of private property. Accordingly, final ownership of land is in the hands of the state. The other *CdeA*, however, considers it acceptable to apply the actual *Ley Indigena*.

Cantero also noted that another difficulty is related to property under control of SASIPA, a branch of CORFO, as well as CONAF which together own approximately 70% of the island and in which is found about 90% of the historical and cultural places. The ceremonial site of Orongo is in the hands of CONAF and this is rejected by islanders as they do not accept that their sacred places are dependent upon outside services. There was an intent to restore some parts of Orongo that are deteriorating but the community was unable to act because it was first necessary to ask permission from CONAF, which in turn had to solicit the head office in Santiago. They also had to clear it with the Consejo de Monumentos, in Santiago.

When asked if there exists any separatist movement, Cantero said no, for it is well understood that the great distance from the continent would signify additional sacrifice in order to have sovereignty. As an example of difficulties, he pointed to the onerous conditions of life when, during a year, a kilo of bread costs on the average of US \$2.00 but then is increased to US \$2.80 during times of scarcity. *Trans., W. Liller.*

- In September a medical team was set to go to the island, according to *El Mercurio de Valparaiso* (for 19 September). The team is composed of a surgeon, an anesthesiologist, and an odontologist who will offer immediate attention to any

islander. They will work in the Hangaroa hospital, "one of the most modern in the county...." Later this year, an internist will go to the island.

- The island's new mayor, Pedro Edmunds Paoa, took over the position on 26 September. He replaces former mayor, Alberto Hotus. The new mayor, better known as Petero, speaks fluent English and is a member of the *Consejo de Ancianos* No. 1. His father is Juan Edmunds, several times ex-Mayor of Hangaroa. Petero studied at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Santiago de Chile

The National Conservation Center of Chile has compiled a list of all unpublished reports that deal with conservation topics including geological, biological, stone analysis, and all meteorological data since 1937. This valuable collection of material is available on disk, and was compiled by Paula Valenzuela of the Conservation Center under a grant from the World Monuments Fund. This 'gold mine' of information and key to where unpublished reports can be found will prove to be invaluable to conservation researchers. A copy will be available at the Biblioteca Mulloy, Viña del Mar, Chile

International News

United States

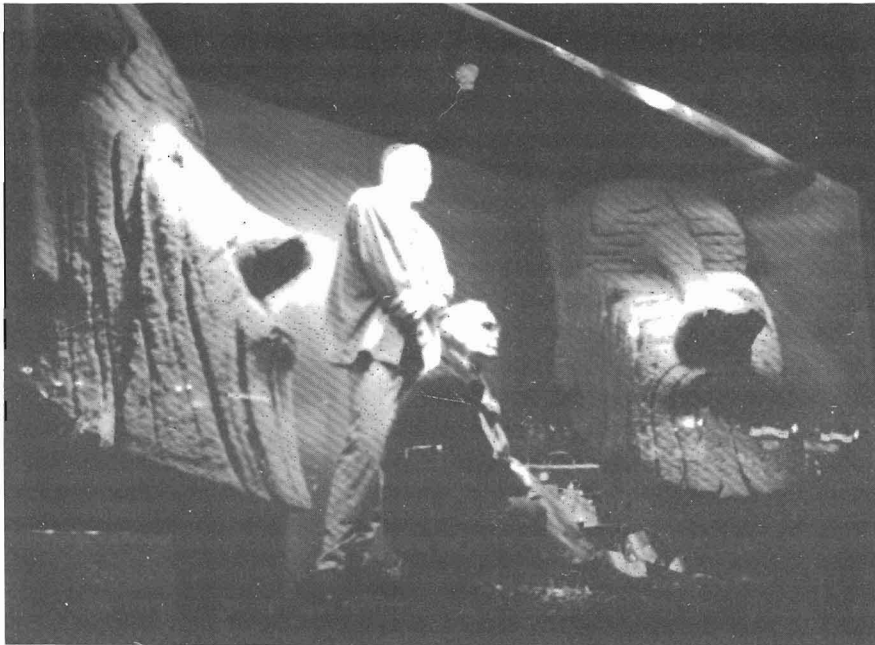
The October issue of *Islands Magazine* (vol.14,2:154-182) has a long rambling contribution by Charles Champlin describing Hollywood's love affair with the South Seas. Titled "Ballyhoo and Bali Ha'i", it describes all the myriad films either made in, or about, the Pacific islands. The first was a silent five-reeler made in 1914. From there we run the gamut from Joan Crawford in *Rain* to Dorothy Lamour in a sarong, and all three of the *Mutiny of the Bounty* flicks. A lot of "South Seas" films were shot on Catalina, in southern France, Hawai'i--or on a Hollywood sound stage. With good reason--local conditions can be trying. When director William Graham was shooting *Return to the Blue Lagoon* on Taveuni (Fiji) he commented, "If this is paradise, I'll go back to hell where I belong." The most recent film to be made in the South Seas is *Rapa-Nui* but this rates only one brief paragraph.

The minimal treatment of the film in *Islands Magazine* is more than compensated for by movie critics in the American press, who have ranged from tongue-in-cheek barbs to downright nasty. Edward Guthmann, *San Francisco Chronicle* (September 23), calls it a "mindless costume epic" and states that it "could win a place in movie history as one of the most ambitious, ill-fated dogs of all time." Film critic Roger Ebert's assessment: "...one of the worst movies ever made." However, he did like all the bare breasts.

Jo Anne Van Tilburg (*Los Angeles Times*, September 26), added a follow up on a review by Kenneth Turan in the *Times*, by comparing the phony melodramatic scenes between the *ariki mau* and the evil priest as approaching the "level of Three Stooges comedy". She concludes: "It is but the latest in a long and lamentable history of drivel written about Rapa Nui."

What the film critics misunderstand, and as Van Tilburg

points out: the birdman ritual was not an Olympic event but had a strong religious focus. For a review of *Rapa Nui* by someone who knows the island well, see the Reviews section of this issue beginning on page 111.



Moai in Harrods window. Photo: Annette Parkes

London

• *Moai* at Harrods: From mid-September to mid-October, there were 18 replica *moai* heads in the windows of Harrods, London's most famous and illustrious store. This was not, however, linked to the movie or indeed to anything else! A member of the store's display department had seen photographs of the island's statues in a magazine, and liked their shape, so she commissioned 18 replicas from Graham Sweet, a Cardiff sculptor. Sweet is Britain's leading specialist in carving polystyrene for window displays, and is best known for having invented 'Rustlite', a technique of giving polystyrene replicas of heavy industrial iron (machinery, chains, etc) an authentic rusted age-worn appearance. The Harrods heads were each about 7 feet high; apart from looking as if they were made of sedimentary rock, with fissures--a purposeful decision rather than an error--they were accurate facsimiles, coated with sand and textured to look like rocks. They stood, singly or in pairs, in the windows as a background for the human mannequins wearing tweedy clothes: an amazing sight that stopped quite a few shoppers and tourists in their tracks, which was presumably the aim of the exercise.

Paul G. Bahn

• British newspapers have been in a flurry over the opening of Costner's film about Rapa Nui. An interview with Kevin Costner titled "Awfully Nice" by Phil Reeves (*The Independent Magazine*, color supplement of the *Independent* for 13 August 1994) touches upon the environmental message in the film and states that Costner himself was not entirely happy with the language and tenor of the film.

France

Word has been received from southern France that Francis Mazière has died. He was 70 years old. Mazière and his Tahitian wife spent several months on Rapa Nui in the late 1960s and their support for a Polynesian Union based in Tahiti helped spark the 'revolution' that occurred in 1965. He is the author of a book about the island, *Fantastic Easter Island*, which sold nearly one million copies. His wife is best remembered on the island for wearing a topless sarong.

China

A few miles outside of Beijing, China, is a recently opened "World Park" containing large scale-models of monuments from all over the globe. Some are excellent (e.g. the Taj Mahal, the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame), while others are somewhat tacky and inaccurate (e.g. Big Ben & the Houses of Parliament). In an artificial lake, on a small island a few yards from Sydney Opera House, there stand about twenty *moai*, one of them wearing a *pukao*. The positioning of the statues may be inaccurate, but clearly they are placed facing outwards so the public can see them better, as there is no access to the island. The best viewpoint is probably from Sydney Harbor Bridge about 80 yards away!

Guy E. Bahn



Moai in China. Photo: Guy E. Bahn